



Mindful Latter-day Saint Living and Apologetics From the Blog

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He That Receiveth My Servants Receiveth Me

Melchizedek Priesthood Personal Study Guide 1979-80

To the Individual Latter-day Saint Christian:

Foundational Spiritual Discipline - Study the Scriptures:

Latter-day Saint Christians are strongly encouraged to engage in regular scripture study to deepen their faith and understanding of God's word. This year's focus is on the **Doctrine and Covenants**, a collection of divine revelations given to the Prophet Joseph Smith and other Church leaders. These revelations provide guidance on the **restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ**, offering insight into foundational doctrines, Church organization, and personal spiritual growth.

The **Doctrine and Covenants** is unique among scriptures as it was revealed in modern times, specifically for this **dispensation of the fulness of times**—a period prophesied to be the final era before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. As part of this year’s study challenge, members are encouraged not only to **read and study** these revelations but also to **apply their teachings** in daily life. Doing so can strengthen faith, provide personal direction, and deepen one’s relationship with God.

From the 1979-80 **Melchizedek Priesthood** personal study guide, all bearers and all prospective elders should study the standard works regularly. President Spencer W. Kimball has said:

In the adult curriculum of the Church, the Melchizedek Priesthood quorums. ... study the standard works in rotation. Over a period of eight years, the Old Testament, the Pearl of Great Price, the New Testament, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants are all studied thoroughly. It is hoped that all will support this program of scripture study - to give it great emphasis (“[How Rare a Possession - the Scriptures!](#)” *Ensign*, Sept. 1976, p. 5).

This adaptation of the personal study guide contains thirty updated self-study lessons that will emphasize and demonstrate how to apply some of the important doctrines and themes that occur in the Come Follow Me program for this year for the Doctrine and Covenants.

Lesson 1: Let Every Man Learn His Duty - D&C 107

Personal Study

President Spencer W. Kimball, in an address to the priesthood of the Church, emphasized the importance and honor associated with all the offices and duties of the priesthood:

I realize that before me are hundreds of young men, many of whom are deacons. I remember when I was a deacon. (It has been a long time ago, however.) I thought it was a great honor to be a deacon. My father was always considerate of my responsibilities and always permitted me to take the buggy and horse to gather fast offerings. My responsibility included that part of the town in which I lived, but it was quite a long walk to the homes, and a sack of flour or a bottle of fruit or vegetables or bread became quite heavy as it accumulated. So, the buggy was very comfortable and functional. We have changed to cash in later days, but it was commodities in my day. It was a very great honor to do this service for my Heavenly Father; and though times have changed, when money is given generally instead of commodities, it is still a great honor to perform this service.

I am a deacon. I am always proud that I am a deacon. When I see the Apostles march up to the stand in a solemn assembly to bless the sacrament, and others of the General Authorities step up to the sacrament tables to get the bread and the water and humbly pass it to all the people in the assembly and then return their emptied receptacles, I am very proud that I am a deacon, and a teacher, and a priest.

In our special meetings in the temple, when the brethren of the General Authorities come up to the sacrament table to bless, then pass, the sacrament, then my heart beats more audibly again and I am grateful that I hold the sacred Aaronic Priesthood and have the privilege of taking care of the sacrament.

Then I remember it was Jesus Christ himself who broke the bread and blessed it and passed it to his Apostles. Then I am proud that I can do likewise. And I commend to you that which President Tanner has just said, and the other Brethren, about being worthy to pass the sacrament, and being reverent. (To Bear the Priesthood Worthily; Conference Report, April 1975, p. 117; also, Ensign, May 1975, p. 79

It is a very great honor to be a deacon. It is also a great honor to bear the sacred Melchizedek Priesthood and to serve as an elder or a seventy or a high priest. Do we understand the duties and responsibilities of the priesthood offices that we hold? Are we prepared to give an account to the Lord of what we have done with the sacred power and authority that he has entrusted to our care?

1 - Priesthood is the Power and Authority of God

Spencer W. Kimball has said: "The priesthood is the power and authority of God delegated to man on earth to act in all things pertaining to the salvation of men. It is the means whereby the Lord acts through men to save souls. Without this priesthood power, men are lost" ("The Example of Abraham", Ensign, June 1975, p. 3).

- 1) D&C 107:1-6, 18-20. There are in the Church two divisions of priesthood - the Melchizedek Priesthood and the Aaronic Priesthood. What do the scriptures say is the power and authority of the higher priesthood?
- 2) What is the power and authority of the lesser priesthood?
- 3) What priesthood offices are there in the Melchizedek Priesthood? D&C 107: 9-11, 23, 25; 124:91-93.
- 4) What priesthood officers are there in the Aaronic Priesthood? D&C 20:46, 53, 57-59, 68

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- 5) D&C 124:143 - Why has the Lord provided these priesthood offices (compare Ephesians 4:11-15)?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie has said that "the priesthood is greater than any of its offices. No office adds power, dignity or authority to the priesthood. All offices derive their rights, virtues, and authorities from the priesthood" ("Tools to Help the Quorum Achieve Its Goals," unpublished address at Regional Representatives' seminar, 4 Oct. 1973, p. 2).

1. Since the Priesthood offices, can a high priest perform any greater service in the kingdom than an elder? Why?
2. Are the Apostles entitled to any blessings not available to all the elders of the kingdom? Why is this so?

2. Act in the Office in Which You are Appointed

What are the offices or callings in the priesthood? Elder Bruce R. McConkie explains that "they are assignments to labor on the basis of primary responsibility in a specialized field of priesthood service. Service is essential to salvation. ... We have to get outside of ourselves and do something for someone else, patterning our course after that of the Lord Jesus, if we are going to have an inheritance with him" ("Tools to Help the Quorum Achieve Its Goals," unpublished address at Regional Representatives' seminar, 4 Oct. 1973, p. 2)

Why do we have offices or callings in the priesthood? Elder McConkie has said: "So that brethren can become specialists in the performance of priesthood labors. ... In other words, the perfect system of priesthood correlation is for an elder to do the work of an elder, a seventy the work of a seventy, and the high priest the work of a high priest" ("Tools to Help the Quorum Achieve Its Goals," unpublished address at Regional Representatives' seminar, 4 Oct. 1973, p. 2).

1. D&C 20:38-45 - What is the work of an elder?
2. What additional elements of the work of an elder are listed in these verses: D&C 42:12; 107:11-12?
3. What additional duties have been assigned to elders in the Church today by those who hold the keys to direct the work of the priesthood?
4. D&C 107:25, 97. What is the work of a seventy? Seventies are elders with all the powers of elders, plus the additional call and ordination to do what?
5. D&C 107:10, 12, 17. What is the work of a high priest?
6. What additional elements of the work of a high priest are listed in these verses: D&C 102:1; 124:133-35?

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7. High priests are elders with all the powers of elders, plus the additional call and ordination to do what?
 8. D&C 84:109-10. What are the Lord's instructions to those who hold the various offices of the priesthood?
 9. D&C 107:99-100. What two things does the Lord expect of every priesthood bearer?

3. Will it Make a Difference?

The Lord expects every priesthood bearer to learn his duty and to act diligently in his own calling. By studying the scriptures in this lesson, we can learn more about the priesthood we bear and how to magnify our calling in it. We should study further to increase our understanding of the duties and opportunities of the priesthood office we hold. We should always remember that our labors in our priesthood office are subject to the presidency of our quorum leader. Let us learn our duties and strive diligently to act in the priesthood office to which we have been called.

Reflective Questions:

1. What is the priesthood, and why is it important?
2. What are the offices in the two divisions of priesthood?
3. Why has the Lord provided these priesthood offices?

Elder McConkie's address, "Only an Elder." This address was printed in *My Eternal* from the Lord: A Personal Study Guide for Melchizedek 1976-77, pages 239-49, and in the *Ensign*, June 1975, pages 66-69.

President Joseph F. Smith stated:

"I hold to the doctrine that the duty of a teacher is as sacred as the duty of an apostle, in the sphere in which he is called to act. ... A deacon in the Church should exercise the authority of that calling in the Priesthood, and honor that position as sincerely and faithfully as a high priest or apostle should his calling" (Gospel Doctrine, pp. 163, 168).

Reflective Questions:

1. Discuss the nature and purpose of the "Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood" found in Doctrine and Covenants 84:33-44).
2. What does the Lord expect of us as worthy priesthood holders?
3. What blessings are promised to those who obtain the priesthood and magnify their calling?
4. What does it mean to magnify a calling? (See also Jacob 1:19; Ezekiel 3:17-21).

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5. As a priesthood bearer, what can I do to learn my duties? To keep them in mind? to magnify my calling better?
 6. What do you understand your priesthood duties to be?
 7. What plans do you have to learn and better understand your priesthood duties?
 8. How do you plan to magnify your priesthood calling? In what ways?
 9. Are your plans consistent with the principles of priesthood service as found in the Doctrine and Covenants?
 10. How are priesthood holders able to help those who may struggle with understanding or magnifying their priesthood duties and responsibilities?